

## REMEMBRANCES:

As the project officer who planned and justified the creation of the Military Pay Center, and subsequently became its first CO, I can add a little to the "Brief History". The other "pay related functions" that we moved out of USCGHQ to Riverdale were: Retired Pay, Reserve Pay, Settlements and Records, and Allotments. As far as the name "Military Pay Center" is concerned, because I was only a LCDR, my choice of Pay and Personnel Support Center (PPSC) was overruled. I was also intimately involved in the Riverdale site replacement process while I was CO. Worked with Topeka Chamber of Commerce to convince our people that Topeka wasn't such a terrible place to move to.

Rich Losea  
Capt, USCG (Ret)

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Hopefully this is a brief, at least for me, summary of the events leading up to the US Coast Guard relocating their Pay and Personnel Functions from Riverdale, Maryland to Topeka, Kansas. Relocation of non-policy functions of government from the Washington, DC metropolitan area was a policy of President John F. Kennedy promulgated by OMB circular in 1961. This obviously was not a popular policy in the eyes of Maryland and Virginia politicians. Various efforts by the Coast Guard to relocate to first Oklahoma City, OK and Granite City, IL were thwarted by political forces in favor of the status quo.

In 1980, Ronald Reagan won election to the presidency in a landslide, carrying with him Republican control of the Senate. Bob Dole, the senior senator from Kansas became chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, a very powerful position. Nancy Landon Kasselbaum was the junior senator from Kansas. Both played key roles in breaking the logjam opposing relocating the Coast Guard's Pay and Personnel Functions.

The criteria for selection of a new site drafted by yours truly and improved on by many others included location in the central time zone. The central time zone was chosen by computing the centroid of Coast Guard personnel in locations such as Alaska, Hawaii, London, Japan, etc. There had to be a US Treasury Disbursing Office nearby, in our case Kansas City, Kansas. There had to be vacant available government space suitable for remote computerized operations. The federal building in Topeka met the criteria admirably and GSA personnel gave really outstanding cooperation in the move. The savings from using 'free' government space could overcome the cost of a move, since we were leasing in our previous location. We chose not to make an issue of computers at that time as remote operating technology was available, and the computer issue focused the opposition to a move previously to Oklahoma City, and we did learn by sad experience. Also, there had to be available moderate priced housing, a criteria Topeka met admirably due to the recent closing of Forbes Air Force Base from active duty. Multiple listing contained over 1,000 homes for our 225 personnel to view.

The Topeka Chamber of Commerce played a key role in overcoming opposition to any move from the Washington, DC area, flooding the Coast Guard Commandant with letters, making timely visits to our senators and keeping the issue on the front burner. It was an exciting day for

me when I fielded a direct call from Secretary Drew Lewis of the Department of Transportation, telling me he was going ahead with Topeka and to KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT as these matters were announced by him and him alone. I hardly needed the phone to hear him he knew how to be emphatic.

The rest is history. Captain Tom Omri moved the personnel to Topeka, I followed a year or so later with the PMIS/JUMPS team and 2000 pay records to begin the parallel testing of PMIS/JUMPS that lasted for 3 years before we were able to declare mission accomplished and the late RADM Henry Bell presented me with the Legion of Merit and my retirement orders on June 30, 1986. I am honored to have been invited back for this 25th Anniversary Celebration.

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